



City of Lowell – Community Preservation Committee

Community Preservation Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, October 6, 2022, 6:30p.m.

Conducted in-person and via zoom

Note: These minutes are not completed verbatim. For a recording of the meeting, visit www.ltc.org

Members Present

Adam Baacke, Chair
Sinead Gallivan, Member
Francesca Cigliano, Member
Yovani Baez-Rose, Member
Sidney Liang, Member
Troy Depeiza, Member
Brad Buitenhuys, Member
Philip Shea, Member

Members Absent

Ryan Rourke, Member

Others Present

Dylan Ricker, Associate Planner

A quorum of the Committee was present. A. Baacke called the meeting to order, the time was 6:30 pm.

I. Minutes for Approval

September 22, 2022 Meeting Minutes

P. Shea said the minutes indicated he was absent, and he stated that he was not let into the zoom by the host. P. Shea said he watched the entire meeting and listened.

II. Continued Business

III. New Business

A. Baacke stated this meeting will be used to hear presentations and the for the CPC to ask questions. A. Baacke said the CPC will vote on funding at a later meeting.

CPA Application: Donahoe Park

The City of Lowell has applied to the Community Preservation Committee seeking \$802,500 of CPA funding for an Outdoor Recreation project. The applicant seeks to make capital improvements to the City's Donahoe Park at 2 Stratham Street.

On Behalf:

J. Wilson said the proposal is a collaboration with the Parks Department with the goal of giving the park a facelift to bring the park up to a higher standard. J. Wilson said the playground will be updated with a new surface, and new equipment. J. Wilson said the plan includes irrigation for the existing baseball field among other improvements. J.

Wilson said a rain garden will be added as well to address stormwater related erosion, along with additional improvements. J. Wilson said she will be applying for Land, Water, and Conservation funds to close funding gaps.

Discussion:

A. Baacke noted the limitations of total CPA funds available. A. Baacke asked if the playground is the priority, J. Wilson confirmed. A. Baacke asked if accessibility work is required or if the playground could stand on its own as a project. J. Wilson said the playground could stand on its own as a project. J. Wilson said the project will be done in phases based on priorities.

CPA Application: O'Donnell Park

The City of Lowell has applied to the Community Preservation Committee seeking \$1,668,750 of CPA funds for an Outdoor Recreation project. The applicant intends to make capital improvements to the City's O'Donnell Park at 1170 Gorham Street.

On Behalf:

Jessica Wilson, Applicant

J. Wilson said the park has been assessed to determine the needs. J. Wilson said the basketball courts are so damaged they are unplayable, and funds will be used for resurfacing and a priority will also be to upgrade the playground. J. Wilson said the playground is becoming a safety hazard, and noted the need for a new playground surface. J. Wilson said the principal of the nearby school asked for an outdoor classroom which was included in the plans as well. J. Wilson said the overall improvements to the playground and park is the highest priority. J. Wilson added that Land, Water, and Conservation grants will be applied for to close any funding gaps.

Discussion:

T. Depeiza asked about contamination issues at the site. J. Wilson said she does not know the full extent, but she is working with the City's Senior Environmental Office to address these concerns and nature of contamination of the site.

A. Baacke asked which of the proposed park projects is the highest priority. J. Wilson said the O'Donnell Park is the highest priority.

Y. Baez-Rose asked if the School Department will contribute any funding. J. Wilson said the School Department will help with fundraising efforts.

CPA Application: St. George's Church

St. George's Parish Council has applied to the Community Preservation Committee seeking \$500,000 of CPA funds for a Historic Preservation project. The applicant seeks to restore the dome of the historic St. George's Church at 44 Princeton Boulevard.

On Behalf:

Stella McAuliffe, Applicant

Constantine Cambas, Applicant

C. Cambas said the church is over 100 years old, and the dome has several leaks due to storms between 2017-2019. C. Cambas said there is insurance money for the exterior of the dome, and C. Cambas said the dome is the major source of leaks, and noted the dome was an architectural marvel when it was completed. C. Cambas said they have roughly \$800,000 for the repair, but the total repair estimate was over \$1,000,000. C. Cambas said the work would

be to repair the dome and underlying structures. C. Cambas said the timeline will depend on the contractor, and they anticipate the work timeframe being roughly 3 months. C. Cambas said they expect the total repair to be around \$1,300,000 based on a previous estimate.

C. Cambas noted that in addition to church services, the UMass Lowell History Dept. visits the church with students to review the historic architecture and religious artwork.

Discussion:

B. Buitenhuys asked the applicant if they factored in increased costs. C. Cambas said they expect the exterior to be roughly \$800,000 with an additional \$400,000-\$500,000 expected. B. Buitenhuys asked how the applicant is anticipating cost increases. C. Cambas said they would plan to plug any funding gap with CPC funds and additional church fundraising. B. Buitenhuys asked about contingency funds. C. Cambas said without a final estimate they are not certain. B. Buitenhuys expressed concern about funding something without a final estimate. C. Cambas noted the information is incomplete, but this is what is available at this time.

S. McAuliffe said they have contacted an engineering firm and are waiting to hear back for estimates.

F. Cigliano notes that since this is a Historic Preservation project it would require a Preservation Restriction be placed on the property. B. Buitenhuys explained requirements of the Preservation Restriction. A. Baacke said the restriction would likely be in perpetuity to ensure the preservation of the historic structure. S. McAuliffe agreed.

A. Baacke noted that some of the requests are not eligible for CPA funding. S. McAuliffe said they are aware.

S. Liang asked if there is a safety concern right now. S. McAuliffe said there are no safety concerns to their knowledge.

P. Shea asked the applicant to indicate whether they could receive phased funding. P. Shea asked about expected start date. C. Cambas said they had a preliminary assessment for the exterior of the dome, but they are now waiting on a full estimate including the interior work. C. Cambas said the full estimate received in 2019 was for \$1,300,000. C. Cambas said the work is likely a 3 month project, but possibly longer. C. Cambas said they are waiting for a specialist to review the work as well.

P. Shea said it would be beneficial for this info to be provided as well.

CPA Application: Hadley House

The Lowell Housing Authority has applied to the Community Preservation Committee seeking \$150,000 of CPA funds for a Community Housing project. The applicant seeks to restore the Hadley House and create up to five (5) affordable units of veterans housing at 719 Broadway Street.

P. Shea recused himself from the discussion as a member of the Lowell Housing Authority Board.

On Behalf:

Gary Wallace, Applicant

Adam Garvey, Applicant

Laura Watts, Applicant

Kevin Murphy, Applicant's Representative

G. Wallace said the property is 200 years old. G. Wallace said the property was acquired in 2019, and recent legislation was passed for a land acquisition. G. Wallace said the plan is to restore the historic building and create veterans housing. G. Wallace explained the proposed site improvements. G. Wallace explained the prior designs and plans which were completed by the Housing Authority years ago. G. Wallace explained the total proposed units and their sizes and amenities. G. Wallace said the project meets CPA, City goals, and CTI's Community Needs Assessment. G. Wallace explained the funding sources for the projects and noted that CPA funding is only a portion among other sources of funding. G. Wallace noted the Lowell Housing Authority's passed experience constructing affordable housing.

Discussion:

F. Cigliano said the project is a great candidate for CPA funding as it addresses Community Housing and Historic Preservation. F. Cigliano noted the ask money-wise is modest and includes many other funding sources. F. Cigliano asked where TBD funding is expected to come from. G. Wallace said this has been determined yet, this could be from MassDevelopment or from their non-profit partner. F. Cigliano noted the project has not yet obtained their discretionary permits yet from City Boards, and said having these permits are preferable as it shows the project is more shovel ready.

A. Baacke asked the applicant about their permitting schedule. K. Murphy said the land is still owned by the Commonwealth, and it has been a slow process for the Housing Authority to obtain the land. K. Murphy said they are now finally in the process of acquiring the land, and said that they cannot apply for the permits until they acquire the property. K. Murphy said he is confident that once the property is obtained the permits will be applied for. K. Murphy said the applicant has already had meetings with City staff.

B. Buitenhuys agreed with F. Cigliano, and said that there should be permits in hand before any funding is granted from the CPA.

Y. Baez-Rose asked about the affordability restrictions. G. Wallace said the units will be designated for veterans' supportive housing for veterans earning between 0%-30% AMI.

T. Depeiza asked whether the applicant had a detailed cost estimate due to the current volatility in the construction market right now. G. Wallace said the estimate is very detailed and was done in house by Housing Authority staff current to 2022 construction prices.

A. Baacke asked about the site plan and whether it is current and how the existing walking path would be addressed. G. Wallace said they will work with the Planning Department on the issues and added that they would work with any easements. A. Baacke said the concern is that it is in conflict with the proposed parking. G. Wallace said the concerns have not been fully addressed yet.

IV. Other Business

Election of a new Vice-Chair

The Community Preservation Committee will vote to elect a new Vice-Chair.

B. Buitenhuys motioned, and S. Gallivan seconded the motion to nominate Francesca Cigliano as Vice-Chair. The motion passed unanimously, (8-0).

V. Notices

VI. Further Comments from Community Preservation Committee Members

B. Buitenhuys requested all CPA materials be provided to the City Council prior to CPA deliberations. Staff agreed.

S. Gallivan said that staff provided a breakdown and summary of available funding prior to last year's deliberation which was helpful. Staff said this would be provided.

VII. Adjournment

B. Buitenhuis motioned, and F. Cigliano seconded the motion to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously (8-0). The time was 7:15pm.